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Childs, Richard S. *Short Ballot Principles.* Pp. viii, 171. Price, \$1.00.
Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Company, 1911.

Mr. Childs evidently approves Stevenson's paraphrase "man liveth not by bread alone but mostly by catch-phrases." Throughout this cleverly-written series of short essays there are scattered at least a score of expressions designed to make the ideas they stand for stick in the memory. Offices must be "visible," candidates must run in "wieldy" districts, the voters must be organized in "leadership parties," we must get rid of "ramshackle government" and "nomination by forfeit," "if it doesn't 'democ' it isn't democracy." These are examples of the original and in some cases strained effort to boil down ideas into epigrams. However far from the usual standard of academic books this may be in style and terms it has a virtue they often lack—it will be read. Few books have appeared in recent years on technical subjects which will hold the "average man" better than this.

The first five chapters are devoted to the short ballot idea proper which Mr. Childs has already done much to popularize. The discussion is laid upon a series of maxims. The more officers the people elect the less they have to say about elections. A democratic government is one which proves itself such by results. If the people are to control, the office must not be lost in a crowd, either of candidates or elections, therefore, the ballot must be short. Each theorem is proved in a similar way. The argument is forced home by considering the reader to be the average citizen and asking him to answer the questions the elector must face at each turn of the political wheel. In the same way the argument leads to the conclusion that the district must be neither so large that the candidate cannot reach his constituents, nor so small that the people lose interest in the election. Parties must be organized so that it will be easy for new leaders to come to the front by their own efforts. The old party machine must go—here the author wavers, he realizes that districts small in extent do not promise big men so he suggests proportional representation, apparently the Belgian system—but this would force dependence on parties which he wishes to avoid.

Next an analysis is made of the "fits and misfits" especially in city government. Naturally the commission form of government follows. One of the most convincing chapters is that which shows how even here popular control may be present only in form and that a system ideal on paper may be wrecked by oversight of small but important details. The short ballot idea is not necessarily present when a city is in form under a commission, and it may be present even in spite of a long ballot as Chicago's experience shows—thanks to the Municipal Voters' League.

The last chapters of the book are devoted to a criticism of our detailed constitutional limitations, our nomination methods and to a conclusion which is as unlike that ordinarily reached as is the book unlike its fellows. Politics for the average man is a bi-product or a diversion, if the people are to control it, it must be easy for them to manage. "A people who stick resolutely to their firesides and their work—yes, to money making—and stubbornly wait

for politics to come to them, are showing a sober, instinctive common sense that is sounder than the logic of those who scold them."

CHESTER LLOYD JONES.

University of Wisconsin.

Clemenceau, Georges. *South America of To-day.* Pp. xxii, 434. Price, \$2.00. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1911.

The former French premier has given us a volume that represents a study of conditions, social, political and commercial, in Argentine, Uruguay and Brazil, as seen during a three months' trip. It is the work of a statesman of wit and experience.

The title of the book may suggest to the reader something different from what it really is; it is not a traveler's description of the whole continent, but is confined to a general survey of Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil. Here, as in many other cases, there is a tendency to group, under the general denomination of "South America" and "Latin America," countries that politically, economically and in their respective degrees of civilization differ widely from one another. This failure to discriminate is unreasonable, since "South America" or "Latin America" never has existed and may never exist as a political entity.

Two-thirds of the book is dedicated to the Argentine Republic, a country that Clemenceau describes in a vivid way. The really wonderful progress of Argentina, the high level of European civilization which it has developed, the magnificence of Buenos Ayres, with its beautiful parks, monuments, public schools, theatres, hospitals, universities, etc., have found in Clemenceau a deep admirer and masterful portrayer. The reader will find in this volume a much needed revelation to American people of the position Argentina holds to-day among civilized nations.

Clemenceau, speaking of the Argentine family, says: "In their family relations, the differences between the social ideals of the North American and Argentinian are plainly visible. The family tie appears to be stronger in Argentine than, perhaps, any other land. The rich, unlike those of other countries, take pleasure in having large families."

In the remaining part of the volume he studies Uruguay and the Uruguayans; he describes the natural beauties of Rio de Janeiro, the advance of Brazilian society, finishing with a very interesting chapter on Brazilian coffee. These are his closing words: "And now, how can I resist the temptation to draw some sort of conclusion from these notes. . . In every calling there is but one road to success—work. When Candide returned from Buenos Ayres, he brought back from his travels the lesson that we must work in our gardens. Since his days our gardens have grown considerably, and since we are ourselves the first elemental instrument for all work, the first condition of improvement must be the improvement of the material. Therefore, let us work."

HENRY GL.

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